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Disney Outlines Plans for 3 Pixar Films
Entertainment: Details about the movies should soothe concern about studios' collaboration.

Walt Disney Co. unveiled plans Sunday for three computer-animated films in its venture with Pixar Animation Studios Inc., which together created the 2001 hit "Monsters, Inc.," the second-highest grossing animated movie with \$504 million in global ticket sales.

Pixar, which is based in Emeryville, Calif., and is headed by Apple Computer Inc. chief Steven Jobs, makes the movies and Burbank-based Disney markets and distributes them.

The plans should soothe concern on Wall Street over the partnership, which started with 1995's "Toy Story" and has raked in \$1.7 billion in global ticket sales from three subsequent films--"A Bug's Life," "Toy Story 2" and November's "Monsters, Inc."

The most recent movie, a family film about a pair of ghastly-looking but fun-loving monsters who scare humans for a living, has amassed \$253 million in domestic box-office and \$251 million in international ticket sales after setting records in Japan, Britain, Mexico and Spain.

"Monsters" is second in box-office sales to Disney's "The Lion King," which generated \$767 million in worldwide ticket sales after its release in 1994.

First on the slate of new Disney/Pixar films is "Finding Nemo," an underwater adventure set for release in the summer of 2003. It is being written and directed by Andrew Stanton, who was co-director and co-screenwriter of 1998's "A Bug's Life" and co-screenwriter of the "Toy Story" films.

The companies plan to release "The Incredibles," an action-adventure comedy from director Brad Bird ("The Iron Giant") for the 2004 holiday season. It centers on a family of superheroes who save the world while living a quiet suburban life.

Scheduled for 2005 is "Cars," directed by Pixar's two-time Academy Award-winning director John Lasseter. The comedy will feature an assortment of cars as characters who get their kicks on the famous Route 66.

In January, confusion arose among some investors over the length of the companies'

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venture, prompting Jobs to issue a statement saying the two would combine for three more movies under their current working relationship, which is a straightforward 50/50 venture.

Sunday's announcement outlines the three movies under the existing deal, and Disney executives declined to discuss plans beyond the three. But until Sunday, details on the collaboration were sketchy.

On Friday, Disney stock closed at \$24.95 on the New York Stock Exchange, up 20% so far this year. In Nasdaq trading, Pixar ended at \$37.37, up 4% this year.

----- INDEX REFERENCES -----

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